

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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P 111155Z FEB 74

FM USINT DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0058

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 0059

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR

SUBJECT: PERSONNEL SECURITY

REF: STATE 023932

1. EVENING OF FEB. 9 I RAISED SUBJECT OF PERSONNEL SECURITY WITH PRESIDENT ASAD'S PRIVATE SECRETARY DABOUL. DABOUL ASSURED ME I WAS IN NO RPT NO DANGER IN SYRIA, BUT ADDED THAT HE WOULD RAISE MATTER PROMPTLY WITH APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.

2. HALF HOUR LATER ON SAME DAY, DABOUL TELEPHONED ME TO COME AGAIN TO HIS OFFICE WHERE HE INFORMED ME THAT PRESIDENT ASAD HAD BEEN APPRISED OF MATTER AND HAD GIVEN IMMEDIATE INSTRUCTIONS TO "APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES" TO INSURE MY PERSONAL SAFETY AS WELL AS THAT OF OTHER MEMBERS OF INTERESTS SECTION. DABOUL SAID THAT BEGINNING FEB. 10, NUMBER (UNSPECIFIED) OF PLAIN CLOTHESMEN WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO PROTECT ME AND THE INTERESTS SECTION. HE ADVISED THAT I SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF THESE MEN KEEP ME UNDER CONTINUAL SCRUTINY AND, FOR EXAMPLE, FOLLOW ME FROM PLACE TO PLACE. DABOUL CONCLUDED BY AGAIN ASSURING ME THAT I WAS SAFE IN SYRIA, THAT MY PROTECTION WAS SYRIAN RESPONSIBILITY AND THAT I WAS CONSIDERED "ONE OF US".

3. COMMENT: I HAVE NOT RPT NOT THUS FAR BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH IF IN FACT I AM BEING "SHADOWED" FOR MY PROTECTION. FROM CYNICAL POINT OF VIEW, THIS KIND OF PROTECTION HELPS THE SYRIANS TO KILL

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TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE (IF I MAY USE SUCH ANALOGY IN THESE

CIRCUMSTANCES). THEY CAN NOW "PROTECT" ME AS WELL AS MONITOR MY MOVEMENTS. BE THAT AS IT MAY, I BELIEVE THAT I AM AT PRESENT AS SAFE AS CAN BE EXPECTED. I DO NOT INTEND, UNLESS DEPT SO INSTRUCTS ME, TO REQUEST AT THIS TIME ANY MORE SPECIFIC MEASURES FROM SYRIANS, SUCH AS PERSONAL BODYGUARD. I WILL WAIT TO SEE HOW PRESENT ARRANGEMENT ACTUALLY WORKS OUT. IN THIS CONNECTION THERE IS ALREADY FIXED POST MANNED BY ARMED SOLDIERS ON 24-HOUR BASIS IN FRONT OF RESIDENCE. CHANCERY HAS NO SIMILAR SENTRY BUT DIRECTLY ACROSS STREET IS LOCATED HEADQUARTERS OF SYRIAN NATIONAL GUARD AND THERE ARE ARMED SOLDIERS ON DUTY IN STREET DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF CHANCERY 24 HOURS A DAY. END COMMENT.

4. MEANWHILE, WE INTEND TO HIRE AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING SYRIAN TO SIT AT MAIN DOOR OF CHANCERY (WHICH WILL HENCEFORTH BE CLOSED AT ALL TIMES) IN ORDER TO SCREEN VISITORS BEFORE THEY ENTER. WE ARE ALSO INSTALLING IRON GRILL WORK ON WINDOWS FACING ON TO BALCONY FROM MY OFFICE WHICH IS LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR. IN ADDITION, DURING OIB NEXT TRIP TO BEIRUT, GUOY LEE OR I WILL CONSULT WITH RSO TO SEE WHAT ELSE MIGHT BE DONE AND WE WILL ALSO SUGGEST THAT AT HIS CONVENIENCE HE MAKE TRIP OVER TO DAMASCUS TO STUDY SITUATION FURTHER.

5. FINALLY, I HAVE ALSO ON STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL BASIS INFORMED ITALIAN AMBASSADOR OF REPORT WITHOUT GOING INTO ANY DETAILS. I ASKED HIM NOT TO PASS INFO TO HIS SUPERIORS UNTIL SUCH TIME AS I SPOKE TO HIM AGAIN. MY REASONING FOR DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT WITH HIM IS OBVIOUS ONE; HE IS REPRESENTATIVE OF PROTECTING POWER AND SHOULD HAVE SOME KNOWLEDGE OF DEVELOPMENTS LIKE THIS ON CONTINGENCY BASIS. HE HAS PLACED HIMSELF AT MY SERVICE AND HAS ALSO SUGGESTED THAT IF I THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, HE WOULD COORDINATE WITH HIS RSO IN BEIRUT. I TOLD HIM I WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH ON THIS MATTER.

SCOTES

SECRET

NNN

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